

REVISED DRAFT

ADMINISTRATIVE-INTERNAL USE ONLY

This Notice is Current Until Rescinded

PERSONNEL

STAT

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS

Reference:

STAT

1. Among the techniques available to the Agency manager to guide policy-making and to identify organizational problems, the employee questionnaire survey is highly regarded. Employees can express their feelings about organizational matters which affect them, and managers can learn something about the depth and direction of employee concerns. At the Office or Division level, certain Agency components have used surveys as the key instrument in planning for, and later measuring the effects of, major organizational change. At the Career Service and Directorate level, surveys have proved useful in examining critical issues of special relevance to their areas of responsibility. Agency-wide, surveys to help evaluate personnel management practices and policies have demonstrated their usefulness sufficiently that the Office of Personnel is planning to conduct continued periodic surveys in this subject area. Whether focused on the specific concerns of a small unit or addressing broad issues Agency-wide, the employee survey is a communication device that can help meet needs of managers at any level of the organization.

ADMINISTRATIVE-INTERNAL USE ONLY

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

2. While the proliferation of survey use is a healthy sign of managerial disposition to seek out and face up to problems, the possibility of too many surveys of overlapping purposes, too close together in time, poses a risk of impairing their effectiveness. This is particularly apt to occur in the personnel management-related areas of Agency-wide concern: promotion and career advancement policies and mechanisms, performance evaluation systems, assignment procedures, training opportunities, etc. These are also the topic areas which consistently impact most heavily on how one feels in general about one's job, and hence become a major component of "morale". Because of the breadth of interest in these topics, the dangers of "oversurveying" are probably greatest in these areas.

3. This notice seeks to promote the continued proper use of surveys and preserve their utility by establishing some guidelines and a mechanism for coordination.

4. All components planning an employee survey in which questions on general personnel management issues are to be included should inform the Director of Personnel well in advance of its scheduled time of administration. If the Director of Personnel sees a substantial subject-matter overlap with other planned surveys within the same time frame, he will seek to resolve the conflict in some manner satisfactory to the various parties involved. It may prove feasible to combine surveys, in some cases by incorporating a set of questions addressing the

~~ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

~~ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

concerns of a smaller unit as a separate package within a larger survey. If necessary, the Director of Personnel may direct that a particular component postpone its survey on personnel management topics (or that portion of its survey which embraces these topics) until a later date.

5. All components planning surveys, whatever the subject matter, are encouraged to avail themselves, during the early planning stages, of the consulting services of the Psychological Services Staff, Office of Medical Services. This Staff can offer helpful advice and assistance in all phases, including the interpretation of results and planning the follow-on action which stems from them. PSS maintains a specialized software package to process survey data and output it in a well-organized readable form. The Staff also retains permanent survey data files which may provide some useful base-line data, and can serve as a means of tracking changes and trends over time.

~~ADMINISTRATIVE - INTERNAL USE ONLY~~

DRAFT
2/1/78
RMW:kj

This Notice is Current Until Rescinded

PERSONNEL



STAT

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS



STAT

1. Among the techniques available to the Agency manager to guide policy-making and to identify organizational problems, the employee questionnaire survey is highly regarded. Employees can express their feelings about organizational matters which affect them, and managers can learn something about the depth and direction of employee concerns. Whether focused on the specific concerns of a small unit or addressing broad issues Agency-wide, the employee survey is a communication device that can help meet needs of managers at any level of the organization.

2. The possibility of too many surveys of overlapping purposes, too close together in time, poses a risk of impairing their effectiveness. This is particularly apt to occur in the personnel management-related areas of Agency-wide concern: promotion and career advancement policies and mechanisms, performance evaluation systems, manpower utilization, training opportunities, etc. These are also the topic areas which consistently impact most heavily on how one feels in general about one's job, and hence

become a major component of 'morale'. Because of the breadth of interest in these topics, the dangers of "oversurveying" are probably greatest in these areas.

3. The purpose of this notice is to inform potential survey users of the following guidelines and coordination requirements established to preserve its utility:

(a) All components planning surveys, whatever the subject matter, are encouraged to avail themselves, during the early planning stages, of the consulting services of the Psychological Services Staff, Office of Medical Services. This Staff can offer helpful advice and assistance in all phases, including the interpretation of results and planning the follow-on action which stems from them. PSS maintains a specialized software package to process survey data and output it in a well-organized readable form. The Staff also retains permanent survey data files which may provide some useful base-line data, and can serve as a means of tracking changes and trends over time.

(b) All organizational entities planning an employee survey in which questions on general personnel management issues are to be included will inform the Director of Personnel well in advance of its scheduled time of administration. If the Director of Personnel sees a substantial subject-matter overlap with other planned surveys within the same time frame, he will seek to resolve the conflict in some manner satisfactory to the various parties involved. If

necessary, the Director of Personnel may direct that a particular entity postpone its survey on personnel management topics (or that portion of its survey which embraces these topics) until a later date.

~~Administrative - Internal Use Only~~

DRAFT
RMW:kj
12/9/77

This Notice is Current Until Rescinded

PERSONNEL

STAT

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS

Reference:

STAT

1. Among the techniques used to help evaluate personnel management practices, and to identify organizational problems, the employee questionnaire survey is highly regarded. Employees can express their feelings about matters associated with policies and programs and managers can note employee concerns and observations in addressing various organizational problems. The value and effectiveness of this technique may be seriously impaired, however, by too frequent usage or by being accomplished on an ad hoc basis without proper coordination and control.

2. The purpose of this notice is to inform potential survey users of the guidelines and controls established to preserve continued usefulness, i.e. this notice provides for the coordination with appropriate Agency components of employee questionnaire surveys to assure their continued validity as a management tool.

3. Agency regulations state, "The Director of Personnel is responsible for the formulation of Agency personnel management...

~~Administrative - Internal Use Only~~

~~Administrative - Internal Use Only~~

programs, and for guiding and evaluating personnel management action by the Career Services and operating components". Accordingly, I designate the Director of Personnel to be the focal point for the coordination of all employee questionnaire surveys which have as their purpose the soliciting of employee perceptions of personnel programs and procedures.

4. To clarify coverage of this notice typical questions in such surveys would refer to such matters as: promotion and career management practices, competitive and/or performance evaluation systems, manpower utilization, training opportunities, working conditions, etc. The morale, efficiency, and work effectiveness of employees are reflected by their feelings and response toward questions in these and many other categories.

5. Because questionnaire surveys can provide important information and feedback to managers their use is encouraged. However, in view of the fact that periodic Agency-wide employee surveys are planned under the auspices of the Office of Personnel it is necessary that other would-be users follow the procedures herein outlined.

A. Component level employee surveys

Components will inform the Director of Personnel in advance of the contents of the survey and its scheduled time for

~~Administrative - Internal Use Only~~

Administrative - Internal Use Only

administration. To preclude expending unproductive effort or achieving unreliable and invalid results in conducting surveys, trained and knowledgeable persons should be involved in: (1) determining the statistical sampling technique to be used; (2) assuring the proper development and administration of the survey; and (3) interpreting survey results. To this end the Psychological Service Staff (PSS) is available for consultation and guidance. Components should seek advice from PSS as required.

B. Multi-Component or Career Service level employee surveys

Before any steps are taken in preparation of an employee survey which expects to involve employees in more than one component or in a Career Service prior written approval of the Director of Personnel relative to its contents and projected time of administration is required. As indicated under A, qualified persons should be involved throughout the entire process of developing and conducting employee surveys. Coordination with PSS for multi-component or Career Service level surveys is mandatory.

Administrative - Internal Use Only

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM:

Plans Staff, OP
1006 AMES

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

12 December 1977

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S
INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

C/PSS/OMS
706 C of C

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

30/Jan/78

JB

Ken:

The A/DDA has approved placing controls on the use of employee questionnaire surveys to preclude their being overused, etc. The attached draft notice is meant to provide the control necessary for this purpose. Please indicate your concurrence and feel free to comment.

2.

3.

Plans Staff, OP
1006 Ames Bldg.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

3.

Bob:

I think any notice on this subject should seek to educate and to "accentuate the positive" to the maximum extent. I offer here a redraft, with this as the general theme, downplaying the "Thou Shalts" but preserving, I hope, the thrust of what you hope to accomplish--with which I agree!